

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following is a complete, marked up listing of revised claims with a status identifier in parentheses, underlined text indicating insertions, and strikethrough and/or double brackets indicating deletions.

Listing of the Claims

1. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Device for treating a gas/liquid mixture, comprising:
 - an upright vessel with a lower and upper compartment;
 - an inlet for admitting the flow of mixture into the lower compartment;
 - an agglomerating unit placed between the lower and upper compartment for enlarging the liquid droplets in the mixture;
 - a separator arranged in the upper compartment downstream of the agglomerating unit for further separating the mixture into a substantially liquid-containing mixture part and a substantially gas-containing mixture part;
 - a lower outlet for discharging the substantially liquid-containing mixture part from the lower compartment;
 - an upper outlet for discharging the substantially gas-containing mixture part from the upper compartment;
 - collecting means for collecting in or downstream the agglomerating unit the liquid droplets which have broken through the agglomerating unit;and

- recycling means for recycling the collected liquid from the collecting means to the lower compartment.

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Device for treating a gas/liquid mixture, comprising:

- an upright vessel with a lower and upper compartment;
- an inlet for admitting the flow of mixture into the lower compartment;
- an agglomerating unit placed between the lower and upper compartment for enlarging the liquid droplets in the mixture;
- a lower outlet for discharging the substantially liquid-containing mixture part from the lower compartment;
- an upper outlet for discharging the substantially gas-containing mixture part from the upper compartment;
- collecting means for collecting on the ~~downstream~~downstream side of the agglomerating unit liquid droplets which have broken through the agglomerating unit; and
- recycling means for recycling the collected liquid to the lower compartment from the collecting means.

3. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Device according to the claim 1, wherein the agglomerating unit comprises a wire mesh.

4. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the collecting means comprise at least one collecting reservoir extending in the agglomerating unit for collecting the broken-through liquid therein, and wherein recycling means comprise a discharge conduit extending from the collecting reservoir to below the level of the liquid collected in the lower compartment.

5. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the collecting means are arranged over substantially 15% of the cross-section of the vessel.

6. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Device as claimed in claim 3, wherein the mesh is embodied to allow the supplied liquid to break through from a minimum K-value of about 0.1.

7. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the agglomerating unit extends substantially horizontally.

8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the agglomerating unit extends over substantially ~~the whole~~ an entire cross-section of the upright ~~column~~ vessel.

9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Device as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~the thickness of the agglomerating unit is~~ has a substantially constant thickness.

10. (ORIGINAL) Device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the separator comprises one or more cyclone separators.

11. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the separator comprises one or more axial recycle cyclones, the liquid discharge of which extends from the separator to below the liquid level in the lower compartment.

12. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the inlet is connected to a pre-treatment unit for carrying out a first liquid/gas separation, which pre-treatment unit comprises an inlet cyclone separator arranged in the lower compartment.

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method for treating a gas/liquid mixture in an upright vessel with a lower and upper compartment, comprising:

- feeding the gas/liquid flow into the lower compartment of the columnvessel;

- guiding the gas/liquid flow through an agglomerating unity arranged between the lower and upper compartment at high speed such that liquid

breaks through to a position beyond the downstream surface of the agglomerating unit;

- collecting the broken-through liquid;
- recycling the collected liquid to the lower compartment;
- guiding the mixture through a separator in the upper compartment for further separating the mixture into a substantially liquid-containing mixture part and a substantially gas-containing mixture part; and

- discharging the mixture from the lower compartment and discharging the mixture from the upper compartment.

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method for treating a gas/liquid mixture in an upright vessel with a lower and upper compartment, comprising:

- feeding the gas/liquid flow into the lower compartment of the ~~column~~vessel;

- guiding the gas/liquid flow through an agglomerating unit arranged between the lower and upper compartment at high speed such that liquid breaks through to a position beyond the downstream surface of the agglomerating unit;

- collecting the broken-through liquid;
- recycling the collected liquid to the lower compartment;
- discharging the mixture from the lower compartment; and
- discharging the mixture from the upper compartment.

15. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method as claimed in claim 13, wherein the a K-value of the supplied mixture amounts to at least 0.1.

16. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Method as claimed in claim 13, further comprising further separating the mixture in the upper compartment by guiding the mixture through one or more cyclone separators and carrying the separated liquid part to the lower compartment and the separated gas part to the upper outlet.

17. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Method as claimed in claim 13, further comprising pre-treating the introduced gas/liquid flow for separating a part of the liquid from the gas/liquid mixture, wherein the pretreatment comprises of guiding the introduced gas/liquid mixture through one or more inlet cyclones.

18. (CANCELLED)

19. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the liquid contains at least one of oil and water.

20. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Device according to the claim 2, wherein the agglomerating unit comprises a wire mesh.

21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Device as claimed in claim 2, wherein the collecting means ~~comprise~~ comprises at least one collecting reservoir extending in the agglomerating unit for collecting the broken-through liquid therein, and wherein the recycling means ~~comprise~~ comprises a discharge conduit extending from the collecting reservoir to below the level of the liquid collected in the lower compartment.

22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Device as claimed in claim 2, wherein the collecting means are arranged over substantially 15% of the cross-section of the vessel.

23. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Device as claimed in claim 4, wherein ~~the~~ a mesh is embodied to allow the supplied liquid to break through from a minimum K-value of about 0.1.

24. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Device as claimed in claim 5, wherein ~~the~~ a mesh is embodied to allow the supplied liquid to break through from a minimum K-value of about 0.1.

25. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Device as claimed in claim 10, wherein the separator comprises one or more axial recycle cyclones, the liquid discharge of which extends from the separator to below the liquid level in the lower compartment.

26. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the a K-value of the supplied mixture amounts to at least 0.1.

27. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Method as claimed in claim 14, further comprising further separating the mixture in the upper compartment by guiding the mixture through one or more cyclone separators and carrying the separated liquid part to the lower compartment and the separated gas part to the upper outlet.

28. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Method as claimed in claim 14, further comprising pre-treating the introduced gas/liquid flow for separating a part of the liquid from the gas/liquid mixture, wherein the pretreatment comprises of guiding the introduced gas/liquid mixture through one or more inlet cyclones.

29. (CANCELLED)

30. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Device as claimed in claim 2, wherein the liquid contains at least one of oil and water.

31. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Method as claimed in claim 13, wherein the liquid contains at least one of oil and water.

32. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the liquid contains at least one of oil and water.

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END OF CLAIM LISTING

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